

## Garrett Bugle Internet Edition

Volume 59 March 2012 No. 3

Calendar			
Fri., Feb. 24	Pick up your <i>Bugle</i> at Penn Place	Tues., Mar. 13	Lunch Bunch, Town Hall, 12:30
Wed., Feb. 29	Gypsy in Me planning session, Town Office, 7 pm (see p 3)	Thurs., Mar. 15	pm; <i>Bugle</i> deadline, 4 pm Women's Club gen. mtg., election
Thurs., Mar. 1	Jam Session, Town Hall, 8 pm	, , , , , ,	of officers, Town Hall, 7:30 pm (p 2)
Sat., Mar. 3	GIVES, Penn Place, 9 am–1 pm; Cub Scouts drop off Book Project requests (p 4); budget work	Fri., Mar. 16	Film Society, <i>Bill Cunningham New York</i> , Town Hall, dinner 7 pm; film 8 pm (p 5)
	session, Town Hall, 9 am	Thurs., Mar. 22	Happy Hour, Town Hall, 2–4 pm
Sun., Mar. 4	Rebecca Hirsch paintings, Penn	Fri., Mar. 23	Pick up your <i>Bugle</i> at Penn Place
Mon., Mar. 5	Place art space (see p 2) Weekly yard waste collection begins	Wed., Mar. 28	Citizens Assoc. mtg., Town Hall, 8 pm: Nominations for Town Council election
Sat., Mar. 10	Cub Scouts pick up books (p 4)	Thurs., Mar. 29	Jam Session, Town Hall, 8 pm
Sun., Mar. 11	Daylight Savings time begins; set those clocks ahead	Sat., Mar. 31	Large item pickup; Voter registration for May Town Elections, Town Office, 8 am–12 noon (also Sat., April 7)
Mon., Mar. 12	Town Council mtg., Town Hall, 7:30 pm		

### **Thickening Our Receipts**

Much of February's Town Council meeting focused on our budget. Indeed, at times the proceedings felt more like a work session than a council meeting. There was much fiddling with long sheets of paper and chatting about projections. One question throughout was how to "thicken our receipts" (as Ted Pratt put it), so as to lessen the effects on Garrett Park of the bad economy.

Before the Council got to money matters, however, Caroline Turner made a presentation about an upcoming town-wide yard sale, sponsored by the Women's Club and tentatively scheduled for Saturday, April 28. Unlike earlier yard sales, this one would have people in town who want to participate using their own driveways, rather than gathering at some central location. There would be no street closings.

In his remarks, the Mayor noted that a letter protesting the proposed MARC changes has gone to the Secretary of Transportation and to the head of the MTA. Chris also noted that he and Beth Irons attended the Garrett Park Nursery School opening. And the Council will have a work ses-

sion on the 2013 budget on Saturday, March 3, at the Town Hall.

The Mayor also announced that he won't run for re-election (town elections are scheduled for Monday, May 7), noting that town tradition is for two-term mayors. It sounds as though there will also be openings on the Council, so get going on your platform speeches.

The Archives Committee has now hired a part-time archivist to help turn our boxes full of material into a rational system.

The POSCO charette was a runaway success, with lots of people there to share ideas for renovating the park adjacent to the swimming pool. Chris Petito thanked Ida Sullivan for pulling everything together beautifully.

Those of us who, like your reporter, live on Rokeby Avenue and have been panting with anticipation of our new speed bump need pant no more. In answer to a question from Jack Mandel, Ted said that other roadwork will be happening soon on Rokeby, and the town intends to put the hump in at that time. (continued next page)

(continued from previous page)

Ted updated us on capital projects: As everyone who drives through town knows, lots of work has been taking place along both sides of Kenilworth just off Strathmore. Work was finished on the Town Hall side of the avenue in time for the opening of school. There will be some replanting of trees in this location. As I write, work continues on the other side of Kenilworth.

All of this road and sidewalk work should be finished by the end of March. In late March, the town will turn to fixing the Shelley Court drain.

After some unresolved discussion of how the town wants to proceed as we continue to consider changes to our building code—the procedure under discussion here mainly related to how we inform and get input from the county—the Council turned to the budget.

The Council passed an amended budget that reflects our anticipation of lower property taxes and thus lower revenue. ("The history of our income taxes," Jack Mandel marveled, "is really screwy." Because of our small population, if one family happens to get lucky, financially speaking, our revenue can shoot up. Perhaps the Council should make buying lottery tickets mandatory.)

The meeting concluded with Ted's reflections on the town's financial health in these perilous times. "The budget's pretty much on track, and we're in more or less better shape than I thought we'd be. But next year's budget will be much lower than this year's. We project a 30 percent reduction in receipts."

Margaret Soltan

#### Art at Penn Place

The work of painter Rebecca Hirsch will be shown at Penn Place beginning March 4. According to Rebecca, color, shapes, lines, and how they occupy space are her main concerns, whether she is working figuratively or abstractly. Her work in oils tends to be more figurative; her abstractions use additional media including charcoal, ink, gouache, and collage materials. Her ideas come from drawings from life around her as well as from compositions in many sketchbooks. She works on several pieces at a time, feeling that it aids a kind of helpful cross-fertilization.

Rebecca's work has been shown in the Washington, DC, area at several local galleries and business settings. She has also illustrated books, among them *The Mother's Almanac*, by local journalist Marguerite Kelly. She studied painting and design at Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh and received a Bachelor of Fine Arts in painting from American University. She currently lives in Silver Spring with her husband, a woodworker and sculptor.

Bert Zbar

Visit Garrett Park's Web site: www.garrettpark-md.gov

#### **Oral History Volunteers Needed**

Would you like to know more about our town as seen through the eyes of some of those who made Garrett Park the special place it is? To hear first-hand what it was like to live here in earlier times? If so, come join in interviewing some of our long-time residents as part of the Garrett Park Oral History Project. Begun in the 1990s as part of the town's Centennial celebrations, the project is an effort to preserve the memories of Garrett Park that are held by its present and former residents. After a lengthy hiatus, the project is beginning again under the auspices of the Garrett Park Archives Advisory Committee. We hope to capture a sense of what it was like to live in Garrett Park during various times in its history—to enliven the facts and figures found in deed books and census records with anecdotes about people and events in the life of the town.

We are looking for volunteers to conduct interviews and others to transcribe them. We have "how to" information and sample questions to guide the novice interviewer. Interviewing and transcribing are both great ways to get to know some of the town's long-time residents and learn more about the historic town you call home.

If you are interested, please contact the Archives Advisory Committee Chairman, Charlie Snyder, or the Oral History Coordinator, Nancy Schwartz. Also, don't hesitate to contact us with suggestions of persons to interview.

#### Garrett Park Women's Club

All are invited to our general meeting and election on March 15 at the Town Hall (7:30 pm). Also, mark your calendars for the following events in 2012:

Sat., Apr. 28
Sat., May 5
Plant Swap
Sat., May 19
Progressive Dinner
Sat., Jul. 7
Pooch Parade
Sat., Oct. 6
Porches and Patios
Sat., Oct. 13
Attic in the Street

Fri., Dec. 7 Holiday Sing-Along, Town Hall

Sat., Dec. 8 Santa, Town Hall

Mon., Dec. 17 Decorating Contest Judging

Date TBD Youth Art Show—back by popular demand

Caroline Turner, Secretary

The *Garrett Bugle* is a publication of the Citizens Association of Garrett Park, published 10 times a year. Publication of the *Bugle* is supported by member dues. All residents of Garrett Park are members of the Citizens Association. Yearly dues (\$20 per family or \$10 per individual per address) can be sent to Citizens Association, Box 456, Garrett Park, MD 20896.

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Treasurer: Michael Lutkenhouse
Secretary: Lori Conlan

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First-class subscriptions cost \$15 (bulk mail subscriptions are no longer available). Letters to the editor can be submitted by mail or hand to Bugle staff or by e-mail through the town Web site: www.garrettpark-md.gov/submit-BugleArticle.php. The editor reserves the right to edit submissions for length and clarity. Unsigned letters will not be printed.

#### **Town Administrator Notes**

Town budget. The Council will be working on the FY 2013 budget (July 2012 through June 2013), which will be introduced at the regular March meeting (March 12). If any resident has comments or suggestions regarding next fiscal year's budget, please contact the Mayor, a Councilmember, or the Town Office.

Yard waste collection. Weekly yard waste collection begins on Monday, March 5. Please remember to bundle sticks in lengths of no more than 4 feet, and place clippings, leaves, etc., in paper leaf bags. No plastic bags, please.

*Large item pickup.* The next large item pickup is scheduled for Saturday, March 31.

State tax form reminder. Please remember to write "Garrett Park" in the box labeled "City, town or taxing area" when filling out your state income tax forms. This ensures that our community receives its fair share of the income tax revenues that the state distributes to the 23 counties and 157 incorporated cities and towns throughout Maryland. This revenue supports many of the services the town provides to residents. Also, the Town Office can provide copies of most IRS forms, so stop by if you need any.

Town elections 2012. Election Day in Garrett Park will be Monday, May 7. Polls are open from 7 am to 7:30 pm in the public lobby of the Post Office at Penn Place. The terms of office for Mayor Keller and Councilmembers Beth Irons and Hans Wegner are up this year. The last day to register to vote in this election is Saturday, April 7. Candidate nominations will take place during the Citizens Association meeting on Wednesday, March 28, with the Candidates Forum currently set for Wednesday, April 25. Additional nominations may be made by written petition signed by 10 registered voters and filed with the Town Office by 4 pm on Monday, April 16.

#### **Conservation Opportunity**

The Garrett Park Conservation Trust has an opening on its Board of Directors for a conservation-minded individual with a strong interest in preserving open space. GPCTrust is a nonprofit 501C3 organization that strives to preserve open space primarily through the acquisition of conservation easements in town. It also works closely with its sister organization GPCAN (Garrett Park Conservation Action Network) to promote a broader range of conservation values, including energy efficiency, storm water management, and other sustainable ways of living. The Board meets several times each year, usually at the Ingham house, with refreshments, for a fun evening of generating new ideas, setting priorities, and making decisions regarding the future of the organization. If you believe in conservation and would like get involved, please contact Ken Ingham.

Ken Ingham

Absentee ballots. All absentee ballots must be applied for in writing. Absentee Ballot Applications will be available from the Town Office or the town Web site (www.garrettpark-md.gov) on Wednesday, April 18; ballots can be mailed, e-mailed, or faxed to you, or you can come to the Town Office. After May 2, a voter (or that voter's agent) would have to obtain an Absentee Ballot Application in person from the Town Office or the Judges of Election. All ballots must be received by the Judges of Election by the close of the polls at 7:30 pm. Results will be announced at a reception in the Town Hall, we hope by 10 pm. The reception will start at 9:30 pm.

Voter registration. To be eligible to vote in a town election you need to be registered with Montgomery County at your Garrett Park address, or be on the list of qualified noncitizen Garrett Park residents. If you have not voted in a county/ state/national election in the last five years, the Montgomery County Board of Elections will have struck your name from the active voters file. You will need to renew your registration with the Board. The Board of Elections' 24 hour Voter Information Line is 240-777-8683. Also, you may obtain forms needed to register at the Town Office during normal office hours. Special registration hours will also be held on Saturday, March 31, and Saturday, April 7, from 8 am until 12 noon at the Town Office. Please call the Town Office with any questions regarding registration, qualification of voters, nominations, etc.

Ted Pratt, Town Administrator

## An Original Town Musical

In 1955, an energetic group of Garrett Park townspeople wrote and produced a musical comedy called *The Gypsy in Me*. The complete work (music and script) has come to light. What can we do with this treasure?

A planning session is scheduled for Wednesday, February 29, at 7 pm in the Town Office. Please let Marian Green know if you can attend. This could be an exciting project that enhances our understanding of the culture of the past—or not! Give your "gypsy" a chance.



#### **Citizens Association News**

Another successful town dinner was held on Saturday, February 4, at the Town Hall. The evening was festive as neighbors shared wine, ate fine food, and enjoyed great company.

Nominations for the Board of Officers were presented by President Mario Grande and approved by the town. The latest set of officers consists of President Mario Grande, Vice-President Todd Harris, Treasurer Michael Lutkenhouse, and Secretary Lori Conlan.

Upcoming meetings. At the March 28 meeting, the Citizens Association will accept nominations for the town elections on May 7. Three seats are up this year: the Mayor and two Town Council seats. Please consider running for one of these important positions. If interested, please have someone submit your nomination at the meeting.

On April 25, the Citizens Association will hold the annual Candidates Forum. Candidates for offices up for election will be on hand to discuss their views on issues important to Garrett Park.

Annual dues. The Citizens Association 2012 annual dues are being collected: \$10 for individuals and \$20 per family. Thank you to all of those who have already paid. For those who have not, please submit dues by mailing them to the Citizens Association at Box 456.

*Garrett Park listserv.* To join this electronic forum, which allows neighbors to communicate information about town concerns, safety issues,

David Altar David.Altar1@gmail.com (301) 602-2713

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upcoming events, and recommended services, e-mail Todd Harris (Todd@TCH1968.com) or sign in at groups.yahoo.com/group/GarrettParkneighbors/join.

Questions or comments for the Citizens Association? If so, please send a note to P.O. Box 456 or e-mail Mario Grande (mfgrande@aol.com).

#### **Scouting for Books**

Scouts from Garrett Park Pack 521 are collecting used books for the World Bank's Book Project (go.worldbank.org/KK3Y3HZ5A0), which sends books to schools and libraries in developing countries. We need books suitable for schoolchildren (ages 4 to 18) and teaching materials (but please, no materials on US government or history, religious books, or trade publications and journals.)

The Cub Scouts of Pack 521 (sites.google. com/a/cspack521.org/pack521) will be dropping off book requests on March 3 and picking up donations on March 10. To arrange a pickup, please contact Gabriela De La Garza (see your Garrett Park directory), or place books in the plastic bin below the bulletin board in the Post Office. Thank you for your contribution.

#### Help Direct the Green Team

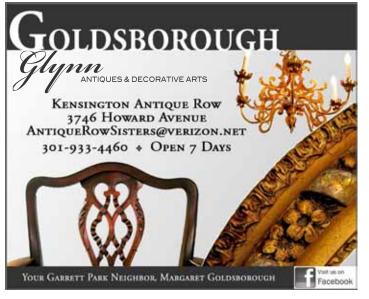
What is sustainability? The United Nations Brundtland Commission in 1987 defined it as "Meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."

The Garrett Park Green Team has put up a very short survey for all townspeople to let us know what sustainable initiatives they are most interested in seeing in Garrett Park. Please fill out the survey yourself, and encourage town friends and neighbors to do it as well. Other members of your own household should fill it out separately, since each person may have different interests.

Go to this link to fill it out: www.surveymon-key.com/s/83NNJ5P. Thank you for filling it out and passing it along!

Karen Anderson





## **Bugle Notes...Sweet and Sour**

- Does anyone know where the metal hanging sign advertising the Citizens Association meetings went to? We used to hang it on the telephone pole at the Kenilworth Waverly light pole a week before the meetings.
- From the PO: Please remember to have your box number on all your correspondence so that the ladies can get your mail to the correct box. Any mail without it is liable to be sent
- back to the sender. Also, make sure you pay your box rent promptly, or your box will probably be rented out to another family. There is a waiting list with all the newcomers moving in.
- → GPES students are settling in nicely, but it's taking the staff a little longer to figure out the room numbers and who goes where. The closets even have room numbers assigned to them.

#### GPFS Shows Bill Cunningham New York, March 16

GP's Film Society is pleased to introduce you to a man most people know nothing about, but who has an international following among people who want to be ahead of the curve in the fashion world. Bill Cunningham is an 80+ year old photographer whose columns in the *New York Times* are avidly read by anyone interested in the latest trends.

This documentary film (2010) follows him as he bicycles through the streets of New York, by day snapping photos to document the interesting or unconventional ways ordinary people dress, and at night capturing the social scene. For a man so closely linked with the world of fashion and

#### Green Again

The green machine races on. This month we are very grateful to Leslie Bethke and Kevin Pope for funding our banner. Thank you very much. If you would care to sponsor a green banner after October of this year, please make out a check to the Citizens Association for \$45 and mail it to me at Box 98.

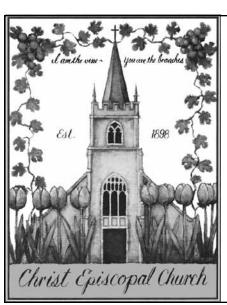
Part of your Citizens Association dues funds this publication, as well as the 4<sup>th</sup> of July festivities, the Newcomers Welcome, and the Town Dinner. (This year's dinner was a yummy affair with the tables filled to capacity.) Did you send in your dues last month in the enclosed envelope? The Citizens Association could sure use the money.

Mary Moyer

high society, Bill Cunningham's personal life is anything but glamorous.

Various critics have described *Bill Cunningham New York* as "a wonderful, understated delight," "a movie about a happy and nice man," "a heartwarming insight into one man's extraordinary life, a window into the fabulous veneer of the Big Apple, and a must-see for anyone interested in the creative process."

The film will be shown Friday, March 16, at 8 pm in the Town Hall. Dinner will be served at 7 pm (menu to be determined). Admission to the film is free to GPFS members and is \$5 for non-members or \$10 for a family. Dinner is usually \$10 per person (children under 12 \$5), with dessert extra. Drinks are also on offer at costs ranging from \$1 to \$5.



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## Letter from the Mayor

The mild winter this year will have several effects in Garrett Park (in addition to the early appearance of daffodils). Temperate weather has permitted the town to go forward with capital improvements that might otherwise have awaited warmer spring days: installation of sidewalks, curbs/gutters, and driveway aprons is nearly complete. Storm drain work will start soon and should be finished before heavier seasonal rains. The town will also begin replacement tree planting earlier than usual. In particular, we look forward to planting an attractive row of trees on the west side of the 10800 block of Kenilworth, where last year a number of aging, brittle Siberian elms were removed, with Pepco's assistance. The town's consulting arborist has located especially attractive tree lilacs that have multiseason interest (spring bloom, fall color, and attractive bark) and will not grow into the power lines as they mature. The town will also replace sugar maples, restoring the allée of fall color in the block of Kenilworth north of Strathmore. Elsewhere in town we will focus on replacement planting opportunities. The lack of severe weather has also had a beneficent impact on the town's snow removal and storm budget.

Speaking of the budget ... the Town Council will have its annual budget-planning work session on Saturday, March 3, at 9 am at the Town Hall. The FY2013 budget will be introduced at the March 12 Council meeting and will be voted at the April 9 Council meeting. Resident views are always welcome, although the work session is primarily for Council participation. If you cannot attend one of these meetings in person, please let us know your thoughts about town financial issues and appropriate town expenditures by e-mail to garrettpark@comcast.net or by chatting with me and Councilmembers. The town's finances are in good shape, especially relative to many jurisdictions that are coping with more severe fiscal challenges. This results from many factors, not the least of which is living in an area that has been insulated from the worst of the broader economic pains affecting so much of our nation. The town administrator and the Town Council are fiscally responsible and prudent. As a result, we have been able to embark on substantial infrastructure improvements while maintaining the high level of services that town residents expect. We have also added a significant asset to the town: the town's insurer recently put the value of the Community Center building at

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\$645,000, after the Nursery School's sizable investment in renovation and upgrades to the building.

None of this is to say that the town should not remain prudent in its financial planning, or that we do not face fiscal challenges. Chief among the latter are continuing cutbacks in state and county revenue sharing: the town's payment from state highway user revenue has been cut 90 percent in each of the last three years, and revenue sharing from Montgomery County has been reduced about 60 percent. The town has no choice but to absorb these cutbacks, which we were initially able to do precisely because the town's finances are solid. The cumulative effect of these reductions, however, is significant. For highway user revenue, for example, the cumulative shortfall is about \$150,000. That would cover a significant portion of the current curb, gutter, and drainage work, which is instead being paid out of the town's general revenues.

As the town's property tax is the only revenue source over which the town has control, we will face some hard choices in assembling the FY13 budget. For fiscal 2013, the town's assessable tax base will shrink about 15 percent. Property assessments are undertaken by the state on a three-year cycle, so the tax base figures lag trends in real estate transactions; this will be the first year in which the full effect of the 2008–2010 downturn in residential sales figures is reflected.

On a bright note, the January 28 meeting to consider possible changes to "Cambria Courts" was a resounding success, with a particularly gratifying turnout of younger residents. A big "thank you" to Ida Sullivan, chair, and the Parks and Open Spaces Committee, as well as Gene Brantly, facilitator of the meeting. We look forward to further ideas from the Committee and residents.

Finally, I want to urge all town residents to consider ways that you can volunteer your expertise and enthusiasm for the benefit of your neighbors. There are several vacancies on town advisory committees (see www.garrettpark-md.gov for more information), and the town election in May presents another opportunity for your participation through elective office. Nominations for mayor and two Council positions will be taken at the March 28 Citizens Association meeting and by petition until April 16. The satisfactions of service to the town and your fellow residents are substantial.

Chris Keller

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